

Appendix F

**Coastal Zone Consistency
Determination**

and

Niagara Greenway Consistency

March 2014

Prepared for:

**U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration
New York State Department of Transportation**

Prepared by:

ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT, INC.
368 Pleasant View Drive
Lancaster, New York 14086

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BOPC	Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy
COB	City of Buffalo
CAF	Coastal Assessment Form
CMP	Coastal Management Program
CZMA	Coastal Zone Consistency Act
E & E	Ecology and Environment, Inc.
EPC	Environmental Performance Criteria
FAN	Federal Aid Notification
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FEIS	Final Environmental Impact Statement
LWRP	Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NYSDOS	New York State Department of State
NYSDOT	New York State Department of Transportation
SEQRA	New York State Environmental Quality Review Act
WCI	Waterfront Corridor Initiative

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Introduction

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), has prepared this Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the New York Gateway Connections Improvement Project to the U.S. Peace Bridge Plaza (Project). The Project is located in the city of Buffalo, Erie County, New York. The Project was developed to address concerns centered on the use of local streets by cross-border traffic as it enters/exits the existing U.S. Border Port of Entry/Peace Bridge Plaza (Plaza). For this Project, the FHWA and NYSDOT are the NEPA joint lead agencies and NYSDOT is the SEQRA (State Environmental Quality Review Act) lead agency.

The FEIS was prepared in accordance with the NYSDOT Project Development Manual, 17 NYCRR (New York Codes, Rules and Regulations) Part 15, and 23 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) 771. The need, purpose, and objectives of the Project and the alternatives being considered are briefly described below. More detailed discussions concerning the Project, the environmental considerations, and options considered are provided in Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 of the FEIS.

1.1 Project Location

The Project is located in the West Side neighborhood of the city of Buffalo, Erie County, New York. The Project area is adjacent to Front Park, which was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted as part of a citywide park and parkway system that opened in 1868; the project also includes a small portion of the park (the existing Baird Drive). Major roadways in the Project area include the Niagara Thruway (I-190), Porter Avenue, Baird Drive, Busti Avenue, and the I-190 ramp connections to and from the Plaza.

1.2 Need, Purpose, and Objectives

The primary need for the Project is to address the limited direct access between the Plaza and I-190. Existing direct access is limited and requires regional and international traffic to use the local street system. This limited direct access increases commercial traffic on the local streets, which were originally designed to meet only the needs of local traffic. An additional need was identified to address the structurally deficient Porter Avenue bridge over I-190.

The purpose of this Project is to reduce the use of local streets by international traffic (autos and trucks) that utilizes the existing Plaza at its current location. The following objectives have been established to support the Project's purpose and need.

- Provide direct access from the Plaza to northbound I-190,
- Redirect through traffic from Front Park,
Remove Baird Drive, and
- Replace the Porter Avenue Bridge over the I-190 and CSX Railroad.

1.3 Project Alternatives

Based on the Project's need, purpose, and objectives, the following alternatives have been developed for study within the FEIS.

- **No Build Alternative.** The No Build Alternative assumes no improvements in the Project area other than those planned by others or implemented as part of routine maintenance. Although the No Build Alternative does not meet the Project's purpose and need, NEPA requires that it be evaluated in the FEIS. The No Build Alternative also serves as the baseline condition against which the potential benefits and effects of the Build Alternative are evaluated.
- **Build Alternative.** The Build Alternative includes the construction of a new ramp (Ramp D) to provide direct access from the Plaza to northbound I-190 and the construction of a new ramp (Ramp PN) from Porter Avenue to the existing I-190 northbound exit ramp (Ramp N/Ramp A) to the Plaza. The combination of these new ramps would allow the removal of Baird Drive from Front Park and conversion of the existing 1.8 acres of roadbed and sidewalk into additional green space. The removal of Baird Drive would permit 4.5 acres of green space located between Busti Avenue and Baird Drive to be re-connected to the greater park area. This alternative would require modifications to the Massachusetts Pumping Station access road, the Shoreline Trail bicycle/pedestrian facility along the waterfront, and four existing ramps in the vicinity of the Plaza, as well as new signage approaching and within the Plaza to better direct vehicles to the appropriate ramps and routes.

Porter Avenue would be modified to include a roundabout or signalized intersection at 4th Street and the location of Ramps PN and Ramp N. Modifications along Porter Avenue also would include removal and replacement of the bridge over I-190 to optimize the traffic flow to the Plaza from I-190 northbound, which would allow for the construction of a new shared-use path along Porter Avenue connecting Front Park to LaSalle Park and the Niagara River waterfront.

The Shoreline Trail (Riverwalk) crossing over the CSX railroad would be relocated along a new alignment north of its existing location due to the construction of the new Ramp D. A new structure would be constructed over I-190 and the CSX railroad, and the realigned Shoreline Trail would turn south along the Black Rock Canal, extending the trail directly along the waterfront before connecting to the existing Shoreline Trail south of its existing underpass beneath I-190.

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Coastal Zone Consistency Determination

In 1972, the federal government enacted the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), which implements the federal Coastal Zone Management Program and provides the basis for protecting, restoring, and responsibly developing the nation's coastal communities and resources. In 1981, in response to the CZMA, the New York State Legislature enacted Article 42 of the Executive Law, the Waterfront Revitalization of Coastal Areas and Inland Waterways Act, leading to the creation of the New York State Coastal Management Program (CMP). The CMP establishes the boundaries of the Coastal Area within which the CMP applies, describes the organizational structure to implement the CMP, and provides a set of statewide policies (articulated in Article 42 at Section 912) enforceable on all state and federal agencies that manage resources and coordinate actions along the state's coastline. Article 42 also offers local governments the opportunity to participate in the state's Coastal Management Program on a voluntary basis. Localities are encouraged to prepare and adopt local waterfront revitalization programs (LWRP), which provide more detailed implementation of the state's CMP.

The City of Buffalo has a draft Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP) that is aimed at restoring and revitalizing the deteriorated and underutilized areas along the City's Lake Erie, Niagara River, and Buffalo River waterfronts. The City's draft LWRP further develops the waterfront goals described in the City's Comprehensive Plan. The LWRP states:

“The City would like to see the area surrounding the Peace Bridge Plaza revitalized as a gateway into the U.S., with the emphasis placed on rehabilitating Front and LaSalle Parks, Porter Avenue, and nearby housing. The redesign of the Peace Bridge Plaza is directly tied to these efforts, which are essential to revitalizing this area of Sub-area 2 as a better quality and better functioning public space. As identified in the City's Waterfront Corridor Initiative, which is a companion effort with the LWRP, the area around the Peace Bridge is a vital node for activity. With the presence of two public parks (one of which provides direct access to the waterfront), the termination of Porter Avenue at the waterfront, and the adjoining mix of marine oriented uses at Cotter Point (an area that is also being improved), and the adjacent residential housing improvement efforts, this area is a prime and prominent location for improving tourism and linkages

2 Coastal Zone Consistency Determination

to the waterfront, creating a destination for public enjoyment, and generally strengthening the community.”

The Buffalo Corridor Management Project, also known as the Waterfront Corridor Initiative (WCI), was funded by a grant under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and is intended to serve as the implementation management plan for the policies and projects identified in the draft LWRP. The WCI works to coordinate achievement of Buffalo’s overarching waterfront goals (e.g., access, environmental quality, economic development, neighborhood connection) with the need to provide efficient transportation through the waterfront corridor. The WCI and related planning documents identify the removal of Baird Drive from Front Park, and improvements to Porter Avenue, as primary goals for the West Side area.

Information presented in Part E of the CAF demonstrates that the Project would have beneficial effects on the existing recreational opportunities and is consistent with the NYSDOS coastal policies.



STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
ALBANY, N.Y. 12232

WWW.DOT.NY.GOV

JOAN McDONALD
COMMISSIONER

ANDREW M. CUOMO
GOVERNOR

August 20, 2013

Mr. Jeffrey Zappieri
Supervisor of Consistency Review
Consistency Review Unit
Office of Communities & Waterfronts
New York State Department of State
Suite 1010
One Commerce Place, 99 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12231-0001

**RE: NY Gateway Connections Improvement Project to the U.S. Peace Bridge Plaza
City of Buffalo, Erie County, NY
Federal Aid Notification**

Dear Mr. Zappieri:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), is preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the NY Gateway Connections Improvement Project to the U.S. Peace Bridge Plaza (Project). The Project is federally-funded and located within the designated New York State Coastal Area. As such, this letter serves as Federal Aid Notification. A completed Coastal Assessment Form (CAF) is also enclosed for your review. It is not anticipated that the Project will require any federal permits or approvals.

The primary need of the Project is to address the limited direct access between the U.S. Border Port of Entry/Peace Bridge Plaza (Plaza) and Interstate 190 (I-190). Existing direct access is limited and requires regional and international traffic to use the local street system. This limited access adds additional commercial traffic to the local streets that were originally designed to only meet the needs of local traffic. The purpose of the Project is to reduce the use of local streets by interstate traffic and provide access to the existing Plaza at its current location.

For your information, a project location map and conceptual plan are enclosed. As shown on the conceptual plan, the proposed project elements include the following:

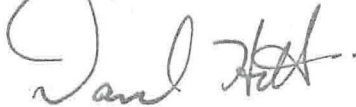
- New Ramp D from the Plaza to I-190 NB
- Removal of Baird Drive from Front Park and minor landscaping and pathway restoration within the park
- Relocation of the Front Park entrance to the Porter Avenue/Lakeview Avenue intersection
- New Ramp PN connecting Porter Avenue to Ramp N
- Minor modifications to Ramps A, C, N, and P
- New access from Porter Avenue to Ramps P and PN
- Possible replacement of Porter Avenue Bridge over I-190 and CSX Railroad
- Possible relocation of Riverwalk (Shoreline Trail) over I-190 and CSX Railroad
- New sidewalk/bike pathway along the south side of Porter Avenue

Please note that the Project Scoping Report for the Project was recently released. This report and additional project information are available on the project website, <https://www.dot.ny.gov/nygateway>.

As documented in the enclosed CAF, NYSDOT has determined that the Project is consistent with New York State Department of State's coastal policies. We respectfully request your review of the enclosed materials and concurrence that the Project is consistent with coastal policies. Due to the accelerated project schedule, we appreciate your quick attention to this request.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (518) 457-4054 or dan.hitt@dot.ny.gov should you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

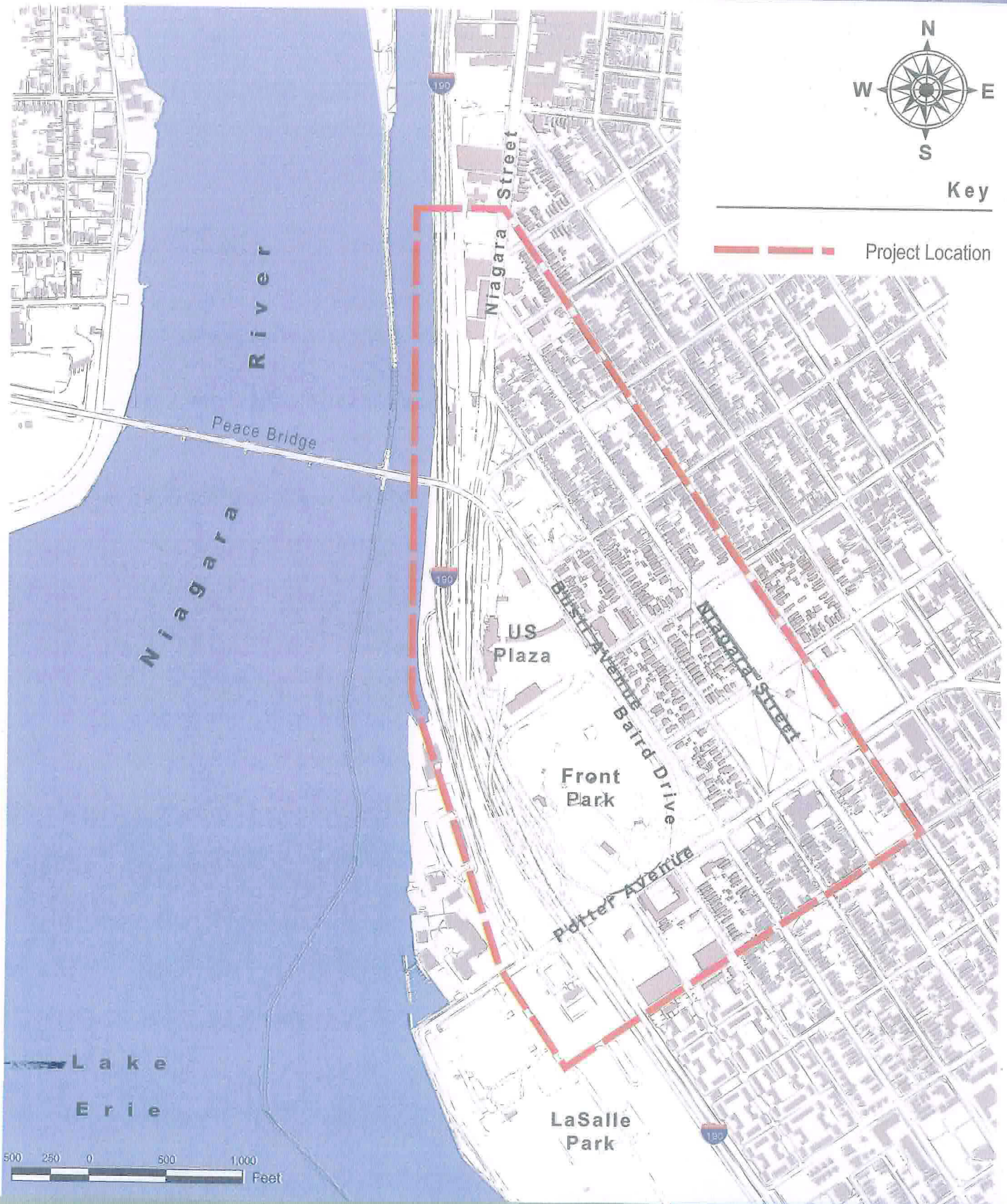


Daniel P. Hitt, RLA
(Acting) Co-Director, Office of Environment

Enclosures: Coastal Assessment Form, Project Location Map, Conceptual Plan

cc: D. Streett, NYSDOT, Engineering Division, 6th Floor
C. Mozrall, NYSDOT Region 5
K. Lorenz, NYSDOT Region 5
R. Davies, FHWA
H. Anker, FHWA
T. Donohue, Parsons
J. Griffis, Ecology & Environment

Project Location Map

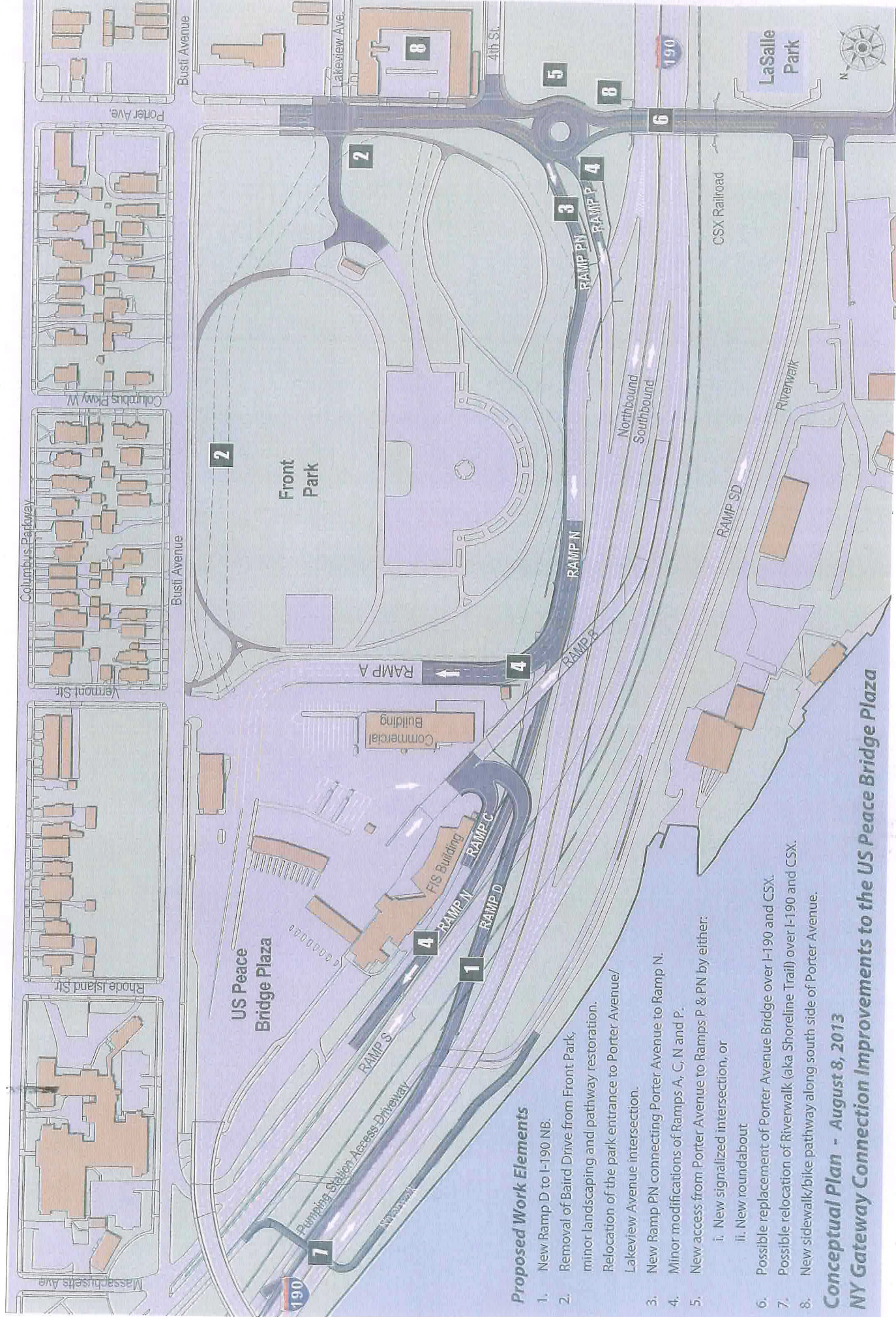


U.S. Department Of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State
Department Of Transportation

Figure 1



Proposed Work Elements

1. New Ramp D to I-190 NB.
2. Removal of Baird Drive from Front Park, minor landscaping and pathway restoration. Relocation of the park entrance to Porter Avenue/Lakeview Avenue intersection.
3. New Ramp PN connecting Porter Avenue to Ramp N.
4. Minor modifications of Ramps A, C, N and P.
5. New access from Porter Avenue to Ramps P & PN by either:
 - i. New signalized intersection, or
 - ii. New roundabout
6. Possible replacement of Porter Avenue Bridge over I-190 and CSX.
7. Possible relocation of Riverwalk (aka Shoreline Trail) over I-190 and CSX.
8. New sidewalk/bike pathway along south side of Porter Avenue.

Conceptual Plan - August 8, 2013
NY Gateway Connection Improvements to the US Peace Bridge Plaza

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF STATE
COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Coastal Assessment Form

A. INSTRUCTIONS (Please print or type all answers)

1. State agencies shall complete this CAF for proposed actions which are subject to Part 600 of Title 19 of the NYCRR. This assessment is intended to supplement other information used by a state agency in making a determination of significance pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (see 6 NYCRR, Part 617). If it is determined that a proposed action will not have a significant effect on the environment, this assessment is intended to assist a state agency in complying with the certification requirements of 19 NYCRR Section 600.4.
2. If any question in Section C on this form is answered "yes", then the proposed action may affect the achievement of the coastal policies contained in Article 42 of the Executive Law. Thus, the action should be analyzed in more detail and, if necessary, modified prior to either (a) making a certification of consistency pursuant to 19 NYCRR Part 600 or, (b) making the findings required under SEQRA, 6 NYCRR, Section 617.11, if the action is one for which an environmental impact statement is being prepared. If an action cannot be certified as consistent with the coastal policies, it shall not be undertaken.
3. Before answering the questions in Section C, the preparer of this form should review the coastal policies contained in 19 NYCRR Section 600.5. A proposed action should be evaluated as to its significant beneficial and adverse effects upon the coastal area.

B. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION

1. Type of state agency action (check appropriate response):
 - (a) Directly undertaken (e.g. capital construction, planning activity, agency regulation, land transaction) ☒
 - (b) Financial assistance (e.g. grant, loan, subsidy) ☐
 - (c) Permit, license, certification ☐
2. Describe nature and extent of action: _____
The Project will provide improved access to and from the U.S. Border Port of Entry/Peace Bridge Plaza (Plaza). See Section E for additional details.
3. Location of action:

<u>Erie County</u>	<u>City of Buffalo</u>	<u>I-190 Access from Peace Bridge Plaza</u>
County	City, Town or Village	Street or Site Description
4. If an application for the proposed action has been filed with the state agency, the following information shall be provided:
 - (a) Name of applicant: N/A
 - (b) Mailing address: _____
 - (c) Telephone Number: Area Code (____) _____
 - (d) State agency application number: _____
5. Will the action be directly undertaken, require funding, or approval by a federal agency?
Yes ☒ No ☐ If yes, which federal agency? FHWA

C. COASTAL ASSESSMENT (Check either "YES" or "NO" for each of the following questions)

YES NO

1. Will the proposed activity be located in, or contiguous to, or have a significant effect upon any of the resource areas identified on the coastal area map:
 - (a) Significant fish or wildlife habitats? ☐ ☒
 - (b) Scenic resources of statewide significance? ☐ ☒
 - (c) Important agricultural lands? ☐ ☒
2. Will the proposed activity have a significant effect upon:
 - (a) Commercial or recreational use of fish and wildlife resources? ☐ ☒
 - (b) Scenic quality of the coastal environment? ☐ ☒
 - (c) Development of future, or existing water dependent uses? ☐ ☒
 - (d) Operation of the State's major ports? ☐ ☒
 - (e) Land and water uses within the State's small harbors? ☐ ☒
 - (f) Existing or potential public recreation opportunities? ☒ ☒
 - (g) Structures, sites or districts of historic, archeological or cultural significance to the State or nation? ☐ ☒

3. Will the proposed activity involve or result in any of the following:

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| (a) Physical alteration of two (2) acres or more of land along the shoreline, land under water or coastal waters? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| (b) Physical alteration of five (5) acres or more of land located elsewhere in the coastal area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| (c) Expansion of existing public services of infrastructure in undeveloped or low density areas of the coastal area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| (d) Energy facility not subject to Article VII or VIII of the Public Service Law? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| (e) Mining, excavation, filling or dredging in coastal waters? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| (f) Reduction of existing or potential public access to or along the shore? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| (g) Sale or change in use of state-owned lands located on the shoreline or under water? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| (h) Development within a designated flood or erosion hazard area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| (i) Development on a beach, dune, barrier island or other natural feature that provides protection against flooding or erosion? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

4. Will the proposed action be located in or have a significant effect upon an area included in an approved Local Waterfront Revitalization Program? ☐ ☒

D. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

If any question in Section C is answered "Yes", AND either of the following two conditions is met:

Section B.1(a) or B.1(b) is checked; or
Section B.1(c) is checked AND B.5 is answered "Yes",

THEN a copy of this completed Coastal Assessment Form shall be submitted to:

New York State Department of State
Office of Coastal, Local Government and Community Sustainability
One Commerce Plaza
99 Washington Avenue, Suite 1010
Albany, New York 12231-0001

If assistance or further information is needed to complete this form, please call the Department of State at (518) 474-6000.

E. REMARKS OR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The primary need of the Project is to address the limited direct access between the U.S. Border Port of Entry/Peace Bridge Plaza (Plaza) and Interstate 190 (I-190). Existing direct access is limited and requires regional and international traffic to use the local street system. This limited access adds additional commercial traffic to the local streets that were originally designed to only meet the needs of local traffic. The purpose of the Project is to reduce the use of local streets by interstate traffic and provide access to the existing Plaza at its current location.

The proposed project elements include the following: new Ramp D from the Plaza to I-190 NB; removal of Baird Drive from Front Park and minor landscaping and pathway restoration within the park; relocation of the Front Park entrance to the Porter Avenue/Lakeview Avenue intersection; new Ramp PN connecting Porter Avenue to Ramp N; minor modifications to Ramps A, C, N, and P; new access from Porter Avenue to Ramps P and PN; possible replacement of the Porter Avenue Bridge over I-190 and CSX Railroad; possible relocation of the Riverwalk (Shoreline Trail) over I-190 and CSX Railroad; and a sidewalk/bike pathway along the south side of Porter Avenue. A project location map and conceptual plan are attached.

NYSDOT has determined that the Project is consistent with NYSDOS's coastal policies. Question C.2 (f) above was answered "yes" due to the beneficial effects that the Project will have on Front Park. The Project will result in a net removal of approximately 1.5 acres of roadway and 0.3 acres of sidewalk in the park; totaling approximately 1.8 acres of pavement removal that will be restored to green space. The removal of Baird Drive and the adjacent sidewalk, which currently bisect the Park, will reconnect approximately 4.2 acres of green space to the east with the remainder of Front Park to the west.

Preparer's Name: Daniel P. Hitt, RLA
(Please print)

Title: (Acting) Co-Director Agency: NYSDOT Office of Environment

Telephone Number: (518) 457-4054 Date: 8/15/13



STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ONE COMMERCE PLAZA
99 WASHINGTON AVENUE
ALBANY, NY 12231-0001

ANDREW M. CUOMO
GOVERNOR

CESAR A. PERALES
SECRETARY OF STATE

October 17, 2013

Mr. Daniel P. Hilt, RLA
(Acting) Co-Director
NYS DOT Office of Environment
Albany, New York 12232

Re: F-2013-0680(FA)
NYS DOT Peace Bridge Plaza
Gateway Connections Improvements to the United
States Peace Bridge Plaza
City of Buffalo, Erie County
General Concurrence - No Objection To Funding

Dear Mr. Hilt:

The Department of State received the information you submitted regarding the above matter on August 22, 2013.

The Department of State has determined that this proposal meets the Department's general consistency concurrence criteria. Therefore, the Department of State has no objection to the use of FHWA funds for this financial assistance activity. This concurrence pertains to the financial assistance activity for this project only. If federal permits or other form of federal agency authorization is required for this activity, the Department of State will conduct a separate review for those permit activities. In such a case, please forward a copy of the federal application for authorization, a completed Federal Consistency Assessment Form, and all supporting information to the Department at the same time it is submitted to the federal agency from which the necessary authorization is requested.

When communicating with us regarding this matter, please contact Jeffrey Zappieri at (518) 474-6000 and refer to our file #F-2013-0680(FA).

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Zappieri
Supervisor, Consistency Review Unit
Division of Coastal Resources

JZ/dc

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Niagara Greenway Consistency

The Niagara River Greenway Plan is a comprehensive plan, finalized on April 4, 2007, that provides a framework for development along the Niagara River from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie (NRGC 2007). The Plan is sponsored by the Niagara River Greenway Commission, which was established by New York State legislation and the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to protect and promote the Niagara River, protect open space and public access, and promote development, including development of a greenway of parks, waterfront trails, tourism, and public access. Each year a variety of improvement and development projects are brought forth and presented to the Commission by sponsors requesting support. The Commission decides the merits of each project presented based upon how it relates to the overall stated goals and objectives of the Niagara River Greenway Plan.

The Project's planned removal of Baird Drive from Front Park and improvements to Porter Avenue would contribute positively to the local environment and quality of life of current and future West Side residents. The Project would have a positive effect on Front Park through the reunification of the 4.3-acre area of the park along Busti Avenue that is currently isolated from the rest of the park via Baird Drive and would ultimately improve access to all of Front Park for neighborhood residents and visitors. NYSDOT will continue to coordinate with local and regional agencies as the design process progresses through the final design phase.

Therefore, the Project would have no potential negative effect on other Niagara Greenway Projects or the City of Buffalo's (COB's) and the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy's (BOPC's) plans for the development and restoration of Front Park and the local waterfront (BOPC 2008; COB 2006, 2007).

NIAGARA RIVER GREENWAY CONSISTENCY REVIEW FORM (NRGCRF)

PIN: 5760.80

PIN: 5760.80

COUNTY: ERIE

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: NY GATEWAY CONNECTIONS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT TO THE US
PEACE BRIDGE PLAZA

DESIGN JOB MANAGER:

PREPARED BY: M. JURKOWSKI

DATE: OCT 28, 2013

Where the form asks for an explanation make a brief yet complete, contemporaneous record that documents the reason(s) behind the reviewer's answer. The explanation should refer to any studies, evaluations, analyses, or considerations that weighed in decision. The numbers following each question in parenthesis refers to the page numbers of the April 4, 2007 plan approved on May 17, 2007 Niagara River Greenway Plan where further description can be found.

Niagara River Greenway Vision Statement

Will the proposed action support the Niagara River Greenway's Vision (pg. 19)? Explain:

The Vision of the Niagara River Greenway is that of a "world-class corridor of places, parks, and landscapes that...provides access to and connections between these important resources while giving rise to economic opportunities for the region." The Build Alternative is consistent with the vision set forth in the Greenway Plan in that it directly supports the stated goals of the Plan by extending the vision and legacy of Frederick Law Olmsted, improves Front Park, and improves the connections between the West Side Neighborhood and the waterfront.

The removal of Baird Drive would return approximately 1.8 acres of green space to Front Park, eliminate through traffic, and provide an opportunity for landscape treatments. Removal of Baird Drive would also facilitate pedestrian access to Front Park from the adjacent residential neighborhood.

A new pathway for pedestrians and bicyclists would be established along the south side of Porter Avenue to provide residents and visitors with a connection between Front Park and LaSalle Park, the waterfront, and the Shoreline Trail. The pathway would be accomplished by widening the existing sidewalk along Porter Avenue and establishing a separate pathway across the Porter Avenue Bridge over the I-190 and the CSX rail line. Users of Front Park would be able to cross to the south side of Porter Avenue at the signalized intersection of Porter Avenue and the vehicular entrance to Front Park.

Pedestrian access to the Erie Canal Heritage Trail is provided on the existing Porter Avenue bridge. The Build Alternative would maintain the public access to the Erie Canal Heritage Trail. Therefore, the proposed action would support the vision of the Niagara River Greenway by maintaining the public access to the Erie Canal Heritage Trail.

Niagara River Greenway Principles

NIAGARA RIVER GREENWAY CONSISTENCY REVIEW FORM (NRGCRF)

PIN: 5760.80

Will the proposed action support the Niagara River Greenway's Principles (pg. 22)? Explain:

The Niagara Greenway principles present a guide to actions and development within the Niagara River Greenway over the long-term, so that the cumulative effect of projects is to move toward achieving the shared vision for the Niagara River Greenway. They promote access and connections, including trail linkages. They support high quality, ecologically-sound projects throughout the region. They are fundamental enough to remain relevant over changing circumstances, providing consistency with flexibility.

The proposed action supports multiple Niagara Greenway Principles, including **Accessibility** and **Connectivity** (via removal of Baird Drive, re-establishing of walkways within Front Park, and modifications to Porter Avenue), and **Partnerships** (any new landscape elements included in this Project would be developed in coordination with the City of Buffalo and the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, consistent with the goals of the master plan and the historic character of the Olmsted design).

Niagara River Greenway Goals

Will the proposed action support the Niagara River Greenway's Goals (pg. 22-25)? Explain:

The proposed action is consistent with multiple goals in the Niagara Greenway Plan, including:

Improving Access and **Making Connections** by re-establishing walkways within Front Park which are currently cut off by Baird Drive, and providing improved pedestrian access and connectivity with the adjacent residential neighborhood on Busti Avenue, including properties within the Prospect Hill Historic District. Modifications to Porter Avenue would improve pedestrian access from the surrounding neighborhoods to the Shoreline Trail.

Celebrate History and Heritage and **Extend Olmsted's Legacy** by making improvements consistent with the historic function of Olmsted's circulation system (the proposed pathway on Porter Avenue), and enhancing connectivity between Front Park and the rest of the park system.

Niagara River Greenway Criteria

Will the proposed action support the Niagara River Greenway's Criteria (pg. 27-35)? Explain:

The proposed action supports multiple Niagara River Greenway Criteria. The project is consistent with **Principles of the Niagara River Greenway** (see first question). Aspects of the project (connection to the Shoreline Trail via Porter Avenue) also support specific **Priorities** for the Greenway, *improving access to waterfront resources*, and *development of an integrated trail and park system*. In addition, the location of the project in relation to the Niagara River is consistent with the Greenway's **Focus Area**, - projects immediately adjacent to the River (and projects that establish strong linkages to the River).

Summary and Conclusion:

NIAGARA RIVER GREENWAY CONSISTENCY REVIEW FORM (NRGCRF)

PIN: 5760.80

Based on answers above prepare a Summary Statement for the DAD:

The Niagara River Greenway is recognized as a world-class corridor of places, parks and landscapes that celebrates and interprets the unique natural beauty, cultural heritage, and recreational resources in Western New York. The Greenway, including the Shoreline Trail, provides access to and connections between these resources while supporting development opportunities for the region. The Build Alternative is consistent with the vision set forth in the Greenway Plan in that it directly supports the stated goals of the Plan by extending the vision and legacy of Frederick Law Olmsted, improves Front Park, and improves the connections between the West Side Neighborhood and the waterfront.

The Build Alternative would have an overall positive effect on Front Park because approximately 1.8 acres of land now utilized as a transportation corridor through the Park would be removed and returned to green space. Improved pedestrian crossings will be provided at the Porter Avenue / Lakeview Avenue intersection. Other pedestrian paths in Front Park severed by Baird Drive would be reconnected. In addition, elimination of Baird Drive through Front Park would improve the viewshed from adjacent residences to the park.

A new pathway for pedestrians and bicyclist would be established along the south side of Porter Avenue to provide residents and visitors with a connection between Front Park and LaSalle Park, the waterfront, and the Shoreline Trail. The pathway would be accomplished by widening the existing sidewalk along Porter Avenue and establishing a separate pathway across the Porter Avenue Bridge over the I-190 and the CSX rail line. Users of Front Park would be able to cross to the south side of Porter Avenue at the signalized intersection of Porter Avenue and the vehicular entrance to Front Park.

The Shoreline Trail crossing over the CSX Railroad would be relocated north of its existing location due to the construction of the new Ramp D. A new structure would be constructed over I-190 and CSX, and then the realigned Shoreline Trail would turn south along the Black Rock Canal, extending along the waterfront. Thus, as a result of the proposed action, the Shoreline Trail would have more frontage along the waterfront.

4

References

- Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy (BOPC). 2008. *The Olmsted City: Plan for the 21st Century*.
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